



A PROCLAMATION

AGAINST

Vicious, Debauch'd, and Prophane Persons.

By the King.

CHARLES R.



Since it hath pleased the Divine Providence in so wonderful a manner, and by ways and means no less miraculous, then those by which he did, heretofore, preserve and restore his own chosen people, to restore Us, and Our good Subjects to each other, and to shew Us a very hopeful prospect, if not to put Us already into possession of that Peace, Happiness, and Security with which this Our Kingdom hath been heretofore blessed; It will become Us all, in Our several Stations, to acknowledge this transcendent goodness of Almighty God, in so seasonable a conjuncture, with such a Circumspection, Integrity, and Reformation in Our Lives, that we may not drive away that Mercy which so near approacheth Us, by making Our selves (wholly) unworthy of it. And in Order hereunto, we think it high time to shew Our dislike of those (against

whom we have been ever though unworthy, though we could not, in this manner declare it) who, under pretence of Affection to Us and Our Service, assume to themselves the liberty of Reviling, Threatning and Reproaching others; and as much as in them lies, endeavor to stifle and divert their good Inclinations to Our Service, and so to prevent that Reconciliation and Union of Hearts and Affections, which can only, with Gods blessing, make Us rejoyce in each other, and keep Our Enemies from rejoycing.

There are likewise another sort of Men, of whom we have heard much, and are sufficiently ashamed, who spend their time in Taverns, Tipling-Houses, and Debauches, giving no other Evidence of their Affection to Us, but in drinking Our health, and Inveighing, against all others, who are not of their own dissolute temper; and who, in truth, have more discredited Our Cause, by the Licence of their Manners and Lives, then they could advance it by their Affection or Courage. We hope that this extraordinary way of delibering Us all, from feared, and almost bringing Us to all we can reasonably hope, hath and will work upon the hearts, of these Men to that degree, that they will cordially renounce all that Licentiousness, Prophaneness, and Ecty, with which they have been corrupted and endeavored to corrupt others, and that they will, hereafter, be examples of Sobriety and Virtue, and make it appear, that what is past was rather the effect of



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whom we have been ever too much inclined, though we could not, in this manner declare it) who, under pretence of Affection to Us and Our Service, assume to themselves the liberty of Reviling, Threatning and Reproaching others; and as much as in them lies, endeavor to stifle and divert their good Inclinations to Our Service, and so to prevent that Reconciliation and Union of Hearts and Affections, which can only, with Gods blessing, make Us rejoyce in each other, and keep Our Enemies from rejoycing.

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And, because the fear of Punishment, or apprehension of Our Displeasure, may have influence upon many, who will not be restrained by the Conscience of their Duty, we do declare, That we will not exercise just Severity against any Malefactors, sooner, then against Men of dissolute, debauch'd, and prophane Lives, with what parts soever they may be otherwise qualified and endowed; and, we hope, that all Persons of Honor, or in Place and Authority, will, so far assist Us, in discountenancing such Men, that their Discretion and Shame will persuade them to reform what their Conscience would not, and that the displeasure of good Men towards them, may supply what the Laws have not; and, it may be, cannot well provide against, there being by the Licence and Corruption of the Times, and the depraved Nature of Men, many Enormities, Scandals, and Impieties, in Practice and Manners, which Laws cannot well describe, and consequently not enough provide against, which may by the example and severity of Vertuous Men, be easily discountenanced, and by degrees suppressed.

However, for the more effectual reforming these Men, who are a discredit to the Nation, and unto any cause they pretend to favor, and to wish well to; we require all Majors, Sheriffs, and Justices of Peace, to be very vigilant and strict in the discovery and prosecution of all Dissolute and Prophane Persons, and such as blaspheme the Name of God, by prophane Swearing and Cursing, or revile or disturbe Ministers, and despise the publick worship of God; that being first bound to the Good behavior, they may be further proceeded against, as is proposed to shame, in such a manner, as the Laws of the Land, and the just and necessary Rules of Government shall direct or permit.

at Our Court at Whitehal, the Thirtieth day of May, in the Twelfth Year of Our Reign.

30 May 1660 T